

Travis served my gubernatorial administration in various capacities, and whether it was through tragedy or triumph, Travis represented my office with the utmost distinction.

After winning the unexpired term for the U.S. Senate in 2010, I asked Travis to help me bring our commonsense West Virginia values to Washington. He served as my director of scheduling in 2011, before returning to my State operations as director of outreach. He did an amazing job visiting the beautiful communities of the Mountain State and listening to our citizens' ideas and concerns.

Recently, I asked Travis to serve as my director of constituent services. I was confident yet again that he could do the job because Travis truly understands what West Virginians need—someone who is compassionate, thoughtful and knowledgeable about our state and the complexities of government.

Not a day passes that Travis is not dedicated to making West Virginia a better place to live, work and raise a family.

I am sad to see Travis leave my office, but I am so excited for his future. He has accepted a position with his alma mater, West Virginia University—our State's flagship university. No one is better suited for the task ahead of him than Travis.

WVU has made a significant and positive impact on the Mountain State. It offers a first-class learning experience and its graduates are spread around the world making a difference. But it is more than just an incredible institution of higher learning. WVU's programs and services improve the lives of our citizens and our communities. In our daily lives, we can always do more, and I am so proud to know that Travis will be helping WVU reach the next level.

It is very difficult to imagine my office without Travis, but I know he will bring the same level of excitement, energy, and dedication to his new position as he brought to my office for more than 9 years. He is a responsive, critical thinker who truly cares about our State and fellow citizens. He is a West Virginian through and through and a proud Mountaineer.

Travis has a bright future ahead of him, and I am pleased to say that very soon he will be marrying the love of his life, Lindsey Bennett—from my hometown of Fairmont—who is a beautiful and intelligent young lady. I know that they will have a long and happy life together, and I am proud to say that they will always remain a part of the Manchin family.

THE FIGHT AGAINST ALS

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, this Fourth of July marked the 75th anniversary of the muggy summer afternoon the great Henry Louis Gehrig bid farewell to baseball and introduced Americans to the illness that

would become known as Lou Gehrig's disease.

Lou Gehrig was the only surviving child of a sheet metal worker and a maid—immigrants from Germany. Gehrig brought his family's humble work ethic and steadfastness to his own job, playing first base for the New York Yankees. His career was one that even a Red Sox fan can admire. On June 1, 1925, 4 days before his 20th birthday, he pinch-hit for Pee Wee Wanninger. On June 2, he broke into the starting lineup for good. He would play every single regular and postseason Yankees game until May 2, 1939—2,130 in a row.

"The Iron Horse," as Gehrig was known, didn't just play a lot of baseball, he played superb baseball. He racked up more than 2,700 hits, for a lifetime batting average of .340 and close to 2,000 runs batted in. He had 493 career home runs. His No. 4 jersey, known as "the Hard Number" by the American League pitchers who had to try to get the ball past him, was the first ever retired from Major League Baseball.

Despite his exceptional play, Gehrig was happy to leave the spotlight to teammate Babe Ruth, or later, Joe DiMaggio. "I'm not a headline guy," he once said. "As long as I was following Ruth to the plate, I could have stood on my head and no one would have known the difference."

Lou Gehrig wasn't just great. He was always great. And his competitive spirit inspired Americans during the long years of the Great Depression. But for some unknown reason, his numbers fell off sharply in the 1938 season. He had trouble gripping the bat, running, even walking and sitting. So on the first Tuesday of May 1939, eight games into the season, the Yankee captain took his name off the lineup card. "I'm benching myself, Joe," he told manager Joe McCarthy, "for the good of the team."

A series of tests at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN, would reveal that amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, a disease that causes nerve cells to stop working and die, was robbing Gehrig's swing of its fabled power.

ALS attacks neurons responsible for controlling voluntary muscles and progresses rapidly. The brain and spinal cord lose the ability to send messages to the muscles of the body, which weaken and atrophy. ALS can impair speaking, swallowing, and breathing. As Gehrig biographer Jonathan Eig explains, the progression of ALS is like "shutting down the body's functions one by one, like a night watchman switching off the factory-floor lights."

Yet on that humid 1939 Independence Day, between the legs of a double-header against the Washington Senators, Lou Gehrig stood before a tangle of microphones at homeplate, bowed more by humility at the adulation of 62,000 Yankee fans, teammates, ball boys, and groundskeepers than by his disease. Clenching his cap in two

hands, the man sportswriter Jim Murray once described as a "Gibraltar in cleats" spoke 278 simple words that still echo in the ears of those of us not even born at the time they were uttered.

"Fans," he began, "for the past two weeks you have been reading about a bad break I got. Yet today I consider myself the luckiest man on the face of the earth."

Although there is still much we have to learn about the causes of ALS, we have made great strides in research and treatment since Lou Gehrig took himself out of the game. With the help of Federal grants, advances in genetic research have opened the door to insights about the disease's hereditary nature, and drugs and assistive technology are improving dramatically.

Kreg Palko of Barrington, RI, recently underwent a pioneering surgery to transplant millions of stem cells into his spinal cord, in hopes of undoing the paralyzing effects of his ALS. Until Kreg discovered he had ALS just last year, he was always on the move—as a speedy defensive back at the Air Force Academy, Gulf War pilot—or active skier and surfer. ALS has dampened his mobility but not his competitive spirit. Kreg has volunteered for every clinical trial he can, and whether or not these treatments heal Kreg, he and his wife Elizabeth know this research will benefit future patients.

The heart of the movement for a cure is the dedicated community of advocates, researchers, physicians, and ALS patients. When members of the Rhode Island chapter of the ALS Association visited my office this May, they brought along baseball cards featuring Rhode Islanders living with ALS. I saw in each face courage and dignity equal to Lou Gehrig's.

Senator Jacob Javits of New York, who worked for years after his 1979 ALS diagnosis to improve long-term care and end-of-life policies, said:

Life does not stop with terminal illness. Only the patient stops if he doesn't have the will to go forward with life.

Brian Dickinson refused to let ALS stop him. Editor of the Providence Journal's editorial page and a prize-winning columnist, he had an indomitable spirit. This was the man who once sang "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" outside KGB headquarters on a tour of Soviet Moscow. And although ALS silenced his voice, Brian continued to tap out his column for a number of years, with the help of a special computer in his home. His profound, optimistic observations inspired his readers. "I do believe," he once assured us, "that the capacity for hope can help us meet stiff challenges."

Brian finally lost his battle with ALS in 2002. Last month, the ALS Association Rhode Island Chapter presented the Brian Dickinson Courage Award to Kreg Palko.

As we look back to the day Lou Gehrig reminded us he had "an awful lot to live for," we should renew our

own will to go forward, with workmanlike determination, toward a cure.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING HAROLD LEONARD "LENNY" KAUFER

• Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, today I recognize the life and legacy of New Jerseyan Lenny Kaufer, who passed away on July 13 at the age of 92. Lenny was a dear friend and inspiration to me at the very dawn of my career in public service. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

Harold Leonard Kaufer was born on August 25, 1921, in Newark, NJ, where he was raised with his 10 siblings in the Roseville neighborhood by his parents, Abraham and Gussie. As a son of Newark, a graduate of its schools, and a New Jersey small business owner, Lenny cared passionately about New Jersey and its future, cheering the revival of its largest city and keeping track of the news "back home." He considered Newark and New Jersey to be at the very core of his identity, and even though his retirement took him to California, he kept a book of historic photos of Newark on his bedside table until the day he died. Lenny never forgot where he came from.

I had the great fortune to get to know Lenny during my time on the Newark City Council and as mayor. I consider him to have been one of the more gentle, kind souls I have ever met, and I appreciated his sound perspective and sage advice. I treasure the conversations we shared, as well as his undeterred love of Newark, and I will miss his wisdom.

Above all else, Lenny was devoted to his family. In 2012, he and his wife Shirley celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary, and they found great pleasure in the time spent with their daughter, three grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. Lenny always gave loved ones a kiss for the road. As a man of faith, after moving to California, he maintained a membership at his temple in New Jersey, just so he could ensure that his family there would always have a home for the High Holidays.

Lenny is mourned by his wife Shirley, his daughter Jacqueline, sisters Madeline and Helga, brother Irwin, three grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, a large extended family, and his many friends and neighbors. Lenny touched so many lives over his 92 years. He was an American treasure. He demonstrated the truth that so often the biggest thing you can do in any day is a small act of kindness, decency, or love. Lenny lived every day with constant kindness, unyielding decency, and a remarkable love for others. I ask that the Senate join me in honoring him and remembering his extraordinary life.●

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL MARIAMNE R. M. OKRZESIK

• Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I wish to honor and pay tribute to an exceptional leader, Col. Mariamne R. Okrzesik. After a lifetime of service to our Nation, Colonel Okrzesik is retiring from the U.S. Air Force and her current position as Director of the Office of Legislative Affairs, United States Central Command, at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, FL. On this occasion I believe it is fitting to recognize Colonel Okrzesik's extraordinary dedication to duty and selfless service to the United States of America.

Colonel Okrzesik has served at all levels in the Air Force. Her career began when she received her commission in 1986 through the Reserve Officer Training Corps program at the University of Maryland. Colonel Okrzesik's distinguished military service has taken her all over the world in defense of our Nation. Her career has included assignments and duties across a wide variety of command, intelligence, and staff positions throughout Europe, the Pacific, and the United States. Colonel Okrzesik has served as an intelligence flight commander; director of operations; executive officer; Major Command; Headquarters Air Force and Secretary of the Air Force staff officer; squadron commander; and Joint Combatant Command staff officer. Colonel Okrzesik has received numerous awards during her career, including the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Meritorious Service Medal with six oak leaf clusters, the Joint Commendation Medal, and Air Force Commendation Medal.

It is a pleasure to recognize Colonel Okrzesik's long and decorated career today and also the great benefit to the Nation she has provided as a senior leader for the U.S. Air Force and Department of Defense. Colonel Okrzesik has always achieved excellence during her career. On behalf of a grateful nation, I join my colleagues today in recognizing and commending Colonel Okrzesik for a lifetime of service to her country. For all she has given and continues to give to our country we are in her debt. As Colonel Okrzesik retires to Lothian, MD, we express our gratitude for her faithful and dedicated service and wish her our sincerest best wishes upon her retirement.●

REMEMBERING JOHN V. EVANS

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I wish to honor the life of former Idaho Governor John Victor Evans. Governor Evans will be missed, but his impact on Idaho and his legacy of dedicated service will endure.

Governor Evans and his family were Idaho pioneers. He was born and raised in Malad, ID. He attended Idaho State University, and like so many of his generation, he went to serve as an infantryman in World War II. After returning from the war, he earned a de-

gree in business and economics from Stanford University.

John dedicated much of his life to public service. He served in the Idaho State Senate where he rose to the positions of majority leader and minority leader. He was mayor of Malad, the town he grew up in. In 1974, he was elected Lieutenant Governor before his terms as Idaho's 27th Governor from 1977 to 1987. He led Idaho through a number of challenging times: the historic settlement of water rights, the closure of the Bunker Hill Mine, and the difficult economic times much of the Nation saw in the 1980s. He also contributed to the national dialogue, having served in leadership positions in the Western Governors Association and National Governor's Association.

He was dedicated to community service and supported numerous efforts and organizations. He was a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, the Fraternal Order of Eagles, and the Rotary Club, and he was a Mason. He also held a number of leadership positions for the Independent Community Bankers Association.

Following his retirement from public office in 1987, he became president of D.L. Evans Bank in Burley, ID. During his tenure, the bank grew from two banks to 21 banks, assisting thousands of Idaho residents and businesses.

Idahoans benefited greatly from his steady leadership in public office and in business. He was known for his open-door policy, strong work ethic and always taking the time to meet with fellow Idahoans. I extend my condolences to his wife Lola, brother Don, children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and many other family members and friends. He will be greatly missed.●

WINNEBAGO COUNTY, IOWA

• Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, the strength of my State of Iowa lies in its vibrant local communities, where citizens come together to foster economic development, make smart investments to expand opportunity, and take the initiative to improve the health and well-being of residents. Over the decades, I have witnessed the growth and revitalization of so many communities across my State. And it has been deeply gratifying to see how my work in Congress has supported these local efforts.

I have always believed in accountability for public officials, and this, my final year in the Senate, is an appropriate time to give an accounting of my work across four decades representing Iowa in Congress. I take pride in accomplishments that have been national in scope—for instance, passing the Americans with Disabilities Act and spearheading successful farm bills. But I take a very special pride in projects that have made a big difference in local communities across my State.

Today, I would like to give an accounting of my work with leaders and